

Pickett. Mr. Pickett will be retiring this Saturday after 27 years of dedicated and valiant service to this body.

His on-the-job duties have been coupled with his strong involvement and commitment to the United States Capitol Police Retirement Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the American Legion. While serving the American Legion, Officer Pickett worked to raise money for Heroes, a benefit for survivors of slain police officers and firefighters.

Officer Pickett also served his Nation proudly in the United States Army before serving the occupants and visitors of our Nation's Capitol, this very building that symbolizes the freedom he protects. Here, at the center of freedom in Washington, D.C., we all wish Officer Keith Pickett a fond farewell and many thanks for his 30 years of service to the Federal Government.

Officer Pickett, along with all of my colleagues in the House, I salute you for the many years of invaluable service you have provided your Nation and your fellow officers. We offer you our thanks and our best wishes as you enter this new era of your life.

COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I call to my colleagues' attention the importance of the Community Reinvestment Act, also known as CRA, which is incorporated within H.R. 10, generally described as the Financial Modernization Act.

The House will be considering H.R. 10 in the next several weeks, and I bring to my colleagues' attention the importance of maintaining CRA provisions in H.R. 10, as well as ensuring the modernization of banking securities and insurance functions to include modernization of the Community Reinvestment Act.

Madam Speaker, CRA has been an enormous success in the last two decades in raising and leveraging over \$1 trillion in low-interest mortgage counseling for housing and small businesses in our underserved communities. However, the need for this kind of support continues and grows. There are over 5 million Americans in substandard housing, according to a 1998 HUD report which states: There has been a sharp increase in the number of working poor families needing housing assistance, with the total number jumping by 265,000, that is 24 percent, from 1991 to 1995.

We have a housing crisis in this country. One way to meet this crisis is to maintain the CRA provisions in H.R. 10, which are in the Leach-LaFalce language, and also modernize CRA by supporting the Gutierrez amendment to H.R. 10.

SEVEN HABITS OF HIGHLY INEFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, this morning let us consider the seven habits of highly ineffective government. Here is a list we can all enjoy, unless, of course, one belongs to the party that has made these seven habits of highly ineffective government what they are most proud of.

Number one, disregard the law of unintended consequences. The 1974 campaign finance "reforms" anyone?

Number two, be compassionate with other people's money. No further comment necessary.

Number three, take credit for the other party's achievements. I think welfare reform would certainly qualify here.

Number four, spend beyond your means. Forty years of liberal Democratic rule where new programs were created without even asking how to pay for them enshrined this into Washington culture.

Number five, demonize your opponent, attack his motives. No such thing as honest disagreements.

Number six, promise tax cuts; pass tax increases once in office. That is how the liberals get elected.

Number seven, expand entitlements that are about to go bankrupt. How do we think Medicare got to where it is now?

SUPPORT THE TAUZIN-TRAFICANT NATIONAL RETAIL SALES TAX

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, the IRS sent Joshua Jones a bill for \$47,000. They said, Joshua, pay up or else. Joshua was in shock. Madam Speaker, Joshua Jones is 13 years old.

Now, I ask my colleagues, what did Joshua do, mow 50,000 lawns? Sell a million cups of lemonade? Beam me up. Thank God the burden of proof is now on the IRS.

But I have a better solution now for the Internal Revenue Service. Support the Tauzin-Trafficant national retail sales tax. No more forms, no more income tax, no more audits, no more bills, no more IRS, and it is that simple. This is not rocket science.

I yield back the dilemma of Joshua Jones.

MEDICARE FUNDING

(Mr. WICKER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WICKER. Madam Speaker, Vice President AL GORE announced his Presidential candidacy yesterday, and in the speech he said, and I quote, "I will make sure that Medicare is never weakened, never looted, never taken away."

How ironic to hear Mr. GORE speak those words at a time when this administration is refusing to spend the funds authorized by Congress to ensure the solvency of the Medicare program.

The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 provided the money to safeguard the health care needs of our Nation's seniors well into the 21st century. Yet, the Clinton-Gore administration is shortchanging Medicare by \$20 billion. Let me repeat that. This administration is shortchanging Medicare by \$20 billion. This underfunding is creating serious problems in the delivery of health services to the nearly 40 million elderly and disabled Americans who depend on Medicare.

The Vice President could make good on his campaign rhetoric and avert a major health care crisis by persuading the bureaucracy at President Clinton's Health Care Financing Administration to quit shortchanging Medicare and restore the funding to the levels authorized by Congress.

REMEMBER MELINDA FLOWERS BY VOTING FOR COMMON-SENSE GUN MEASURES

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, Melinda Flowers was 4 years old when she and her 8 year old sister found a .38-caliber pistol in their mother's closet. They did not know the gun was loaded, and they played with the gun, pointing it at various items around the room. The gun went off. Melinda was fatally shot in the forehead.

As of today, Melinda Flowers' death will no longer remain anonymous. She and the 13 youngsters who die every single day because of guns are not nameless, faceless statistics; they are real people, real children who are dying from an epidemic.

Over the course of the next 2 days, Members of this body can choose between two options. They can vote for modest, common-sense gun safety provisions already approved by the United States Senate, or they can vote for a watered-down gun bill.

The mothers and fathers of this country are consistent in their plea for modest gun safety measures. Child safety locks are a simple, inexpensive way to prevent accidental deaths and in no way restrict a person's right to own a gun. Closing the loophole at gun shows will allow law-abiding citizens to get firearms freely, but prevent guns from falling into the hands of criminals.